11/21/71

Memo on meeting with Cecil Burglass ~~Thursday~~ Friday about 6 p.m. at his office, 2111 Dauphine (944-0316), driven there by Jim Brown.

I had looked Larry Borenstein up Thursday night and found him at Preservation Hall. We then went to his Vuacessin Creole Cafe for coffee, and I told him first the story of how Gaudet (who he says he con't identify) had fingered him and Gaudet's connections. I am to send him stats. Then I discussed the aspects of the Ray case that superficially suggest Mafia involvement. He agreed with me that any Marcello involvement is so unlikely as to be not worthy of consideration. However, when I asked him which of Marcello's lawyers was most likely to be dependable and safest to talk to, he suggested Burglass. He also saw another lawyer in the place. I didn't get his name when he intorduced us. Then Tom Bethell came in with a girl, sat with us, and everything of this character ended. And Larry left, as Jim and I did after Tom finoshed eating.

I told Burglass the story indicating that there was some organized (he said he didn't any longer know what the word meant) crime interest, that holding Ray on ice for so long at at such cost didn't indicate a small operation or one worrying about thousands of dollars. I also made clear that I had no doubt that there was no Marcello involvement, but I at the same time suggested pointedly that there had been something arranged thatbwould make it look like there was and that when the Ray case came apart, there might be a frame already put together. I told him about the prints and other identifications of Ray's associates that the FBI must have, etc. He doesn't think Ray was alone but did not indicate disbelief of his alleged assassin's role. I told him about the exculpatory evidence and that in my opinion the case would never get to the jury because there is no case.

He said that I had used one word that would prove no Marcello involvement, "heroin". He was here emphatic on two points: that Marcello has nothing to do with it and never had and that Ray deserved anything he got, even if innocent of the killing, if he had anything to do with heroin. What he said that I do not believe is that there is only a minor heroin problem in N.O. and that all is known to the police, etc. Now I seem to recall that long ago there was a split in the Mafia and that while Marcello did other things, he wouldn't touch heroin or cocaine, sticking to gambling. David Chandler confirmed this recollection, gave me the name of the figure with whom Marcello disputed, and added detail, that Marcello's position was that the same profit could be made with less penalty from other things like marijuana.

Burglass said that it was well known that Marcello's interests were confined to Gambling, and I emphasized that I had no doubt, that it should be obvious that if I believed there were any Marcello involvement, the last thing I'd be doing is putting my head on the block by talking to him.

He painted an interesting portrait of Marcello, saying that in no way was he like his public image. As an example, generosity. He said Marcello is so tight with a buck he has trouble collecting his fees, and that he never gives money away. I said I knew of a case where Marcello had grubstaked a restaurateur, and Buglass said Marcello lands money out for good interest.

We discussed thepossibility that the tire could have held hot money or securities, and while at first he seemed to feel this could have been the case(he could think of nothing else worth smuggling into Mexico), he then said it was easy to get it out of N.O., which is a major port, plenty of plabes, etc. He cited cases of Jeff parish figures recently getting caught with either or both, in one case about $60,000 worth, so he wound up deprecating that.

I offered him access to my files should he need it to show undependability of FBI reporting, etc., and he seemed to say he tjinks M's federal troubles are over. On FBI reporting, he said that the report of the agent involved in the airport incident didn't even say M had struck him....On Partin he says that when LeCoeur asked the judge to drop the cases "in the interest of justice" the judge said it looked like a payoff and wouldn't.